

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 6, 2012

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DCHD MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESS ALERT

Jacksonville, FL -- The Duval County Health Department (DCHD) has issued a mosquito-borne illness alert for Duval County. Human cases of West Nile Virus (WNV) have been confirmed and there is a heightened concern that additional residents will become ill. The most recent cases involve 35 and 52 year-old males and 41 and 54 year-old females. Duval County has five confirmed cases of WNV in 2012.

Symptoms of West Nile virus may include headache, fever, fatigue, dizziness, weakness and confusion. Physicians should contact their county health department if they suspect an individual may meet the case definition for a mosquito-borne illness. Florida Department of Health (DOH) laboratories provide testing services for physicians treating patients with clinical signs of mosquito-borne disease.

DCHD continues to advise the public to remain diligent in their personal mosquito protection efforts. These should include remembering “**Drain and Cover**”.

DRAIN standing water to stop mosquitoes from multiplying

- Drain water from garbage cans, house gutters, buckets, pool covers, coolers, toys, flower pots or any other containers where sprinkler or rain water has collected.
- Discard old tires, drums, bottles, cans, pots and pans, broken appliances and other items that aren't being used.
- Empty and clean birdbaths and pet's water bowls at least once or twice a week.
- Protect boats and vehicles from rain with tarps that don't accumulate water.
- Maintain swimming pools in good condition and appropriately chlorinated. Empty plastic swimming pools when not in use.

COVER skin with clothing or repellent

- CLOTHING - Wear shoes, socks, and long pants and long-sleeves. This type of protection may be necessary for people who must work in areas where mosquitoes are present.
- REPELLENT - Apply mosquito repellent to bare skin and clothing.
 - Always use repellents according to the label. Repellents with DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, and IR3535 are effective.
 - Use mosquito netting to protect children younger than 2 months old.

COVER doors and windows with screens to keep mosquitoes out of your house

- Repair broken screening on windows, doors, porches, and patios.

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Tips on Repellent Use

- Always read label directions carefully for the approved usage before you apply a repellent. Some repellents are not suitable for children.
- Products with concentrations of up to 30 percent DEET are generally recommended. Other EPA-approved repellents contain Picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535. These products are generally available at local pharmacies. Look for active ingredients to be listed on the product label.
- Apply insect repellent to exposed skin, or onto clothing, but not under clothing.
- In protecting children, read label instructions to be sure the repellent is age-appropriate. According to the CDC, mosquito repellents containing oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under the age of 3 years. DEET is not recommended on children younger than 2 months old.
- Avoid applying repellents to the hands of children. Adults should apply repellent first to their own hands and then transfer it to the child's skin and clothing.
- If additional protection is necessary, apply a permethrin repellent directly to your clothing. Again, always follow the manufacturer's directions.

DOH continues to conduct statewide surveillance for mosquito borne illnesses, including West Nile virus infections, Eastern equine encephalitis, St. Louis encephalitis, malaria, and dengue.

Residents of Florida are encouraged to report dead birds via the website <http://www.MyFWC.com/bird>. For more information on mosquito-borne illnesses, visit DOH's Environmental Public Health website at <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Environment/medicine/arboviral/index.html> or call your DCHD at 904-253-1850.

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